

Effectiveness of COP Climate Change Conference: Review of Cancun

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Introduction

The United Nations Climate Change Conference in Cancun, Mexico, took place from 29 November to 11 December 2010. The conference included the sixteenth session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 16) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

The formal UN decisions adopted in the Cancun Agreement strengthen the global framework for action on climate change. The talks and Agreement at Cancun also help to build trust between nations important for national governments to take the more ambitious efforts needed. In summary, the three most significant achievements in the Cancun Agreement are as follows:

Anchoring of national mitigation commitments: formal recognition and ‘anchoring’ of existing pollution targets and commitments from all major polluting countries, covering around 80 per cent of global emissions. This is the first time pollution commitments from US, China and all other major economies (both developed and developing) have been captured in a formal UN agreement. This illustrates a strong commitment by countries to take action at home to reduce their economic dependence on pollution.

New ‘Green Climate Fund’: agreement to establish a new fund to help mobilize US\$100 billion a year by 2020 to support low pollution economic development; protect tropical forests and help the world’s most vulnerable people build resilience to escalating climate change impacts. This fund will help build confidence amongst governments and add momentum to the UN negotiations and, if implemented well, should unlock billions of dollars of investment in clean energy.

Improved transparency: measures to improve transparency of domestic efforts to reduce pollution, including a process for international review of countries’ actions by technical experts. This includes the use of common international reporting guidelines, ensuring the data provided by countries is complete, comparable, transparent and accurate. This will have important implications for monitoring progress at the national and international level, and is politically very important as improved transparency was a key sticking point between the US and China.

The focus in Cancun was on a two-track negotiating process aiming to enhance long-term cooperation under the Convention and the Protocol. Progress in Cancun is a sign that international climate diplomacy is beginning to catch up with action at the

domestic level in key countries. These efforts are driving a multi-billion dollar clean energy boom, with total global investments predicted to reach US\$154 billion in 2010.

Cancun(COP-16) Climate Change Conference and Bangladesh

Bangladesh has been bestowed with one of the richest bio-diversity of the world by virtue of its geographical location. However, environmental development remains a crucial challenge for this country like most other developing countries. Since most of the development initiatives of various sectors are heavily dependent on natural resources, their contribution to GDP is significantly influenced by sustainable environmental development. A socioeconomic development and environmental sustainability are intricately linked, it is important to integrate environment related issues with the development agenda.

In December, 2010 a Conference of the Parties 16 (CoP-16) was held in Cancun where some important decisions were taken to mitigate the adverse effect of climate change. Bangladesh also emphasis this issues. These are:

- Establish an Adaptation Committee to speed up the adaptation activities;
- Provide assistance and loan to the countries that have less than 10 Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) projects;
- Establishment of Green Climate Fund.
- Allocate US\$30 billion assured by the developed countries to the developing countries for long-term adaptation and mitigation
- Payment of US\$100 billion for a long term by the developed countries from 2020;
- Finalize the Green Climate Fund with a Transitional Committee consisting 40 Members;
- Operate the Green Climate Fund by a board comprising 24 members from the representatives of developed and developing countries;
- Establish a technology mechanism i.e. technology development and exchange system through establishing a technology executive committee and a climate technology center.

Subsequently, some significant achievements were made. Some of these are summarized below:

- Operationalizing the Green Climate Fund: In the case of finance related negotiations, a decision has been taken that developed countries shall mobilize US\$ 30 billion within 3 years as short term finance during 2010-12 at the rate of US\$ 10 billion each year for adaptation and mitigation activities of developing countries. It was also decided that developed and developing countries will mobilize jointly US\$ 100 billion each year till2020;
- Establishing the ‘Technology Mechanism’, ‘Technology Executive Committee’ and ‘Climate Technology Centre and Network’ under the Technology Development and Transfer;

- Finalizing the Adaptation Framework' and 'Adaptation Committee' as well as providing assistance for Least Developed Countries (LDC) to prepare the National Adaptation Plan (NAP);

Cancun Conference & Bangladesh's Initiatives in Combating Climate Change

Bangladesh is an innocent victim of climate change without being responsible at all for global warming. Bangladesh, however, have accepted the reality as a fact of life and engaged a group of dedicated people in the climate change negotiation team who are playing appropriate role in international forums to advocate Bangladesh's case and extract due share of compensation from developed countries who are principally responsible for climate change.

Adaptation and Mitigation

After the Cancun Conference-2010, the government has established the Climate Change Trust Fund with an allocation of Tk. 700 crore from domestic sources in FY 2009-10 to combat the risks of climate change and accelerate adaptation activities. Over the last three consecutive fiscal years, the Government allocated a total of Tk. 2,500 crore for this fund. The main objective of this fund is to implement the Bangladesh Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan (BCCSAP), 2009. of the Climate Change Trust Act 2010, stipulates that 66 percent of the allocated fund has to be spent for implementing approved projects and a minimum of 34 percent have to be kept as fixed deposit. In compliance of the law, Tk. 1,155.00 crore is fixed deposited as FDR in different banks. A total of 202 projects (139 projects by government agency and 63 projects by NGOs) at an estimated cost of Tk. 15, 57 crore are now being implemented (up to June 2013) using the resources from this fund. The Ministry of Environment and Forest has formed a 17 - member Trustee Board chaired by Honorable Minister of Environment and Forests to operate the Climate Change Trust Fund.

The Department of Environment has taken up the following projects for implementation under the Trust Fund:

- Reduce, Reuse and Recycle (3R) wastes in *Gulshan, Baridhara* and *Dhanmondi* areas of Dhaka and *Nasirabad* and *Khulshi* areas of Chittagong. Prepare CDM baseline, capacity building of entrepreneurs to develop CDM project proposal and evaluation of DNA projects under Clean Development Mechanism;
- 'Programmatic CDM' through utilization of waste in all towns (Pourasava/Municipalities) of Bangladesh;
- 'Community Based Adaptation in the Ecologically Critical Areas through Bio-diversity Conservation and Social Protection' project;
- Modernization and Extension of Chittagong Divisional Laboratory to assess and monitor impacts of climate change.
- Market Development initiative for *Bondhu Chula* Improve Cook Stoves.

Some of the significant projects to mitigate the adverse effects of climate change are as follows:

- Innovation and Extension of Rice based Technology compatible with climate change. Farm Productivity and Food security Enhancement of the Vulnerable Farmers in the *Char* Areas of *Jamalpur* and *Sherpur* Districts;
- Water supply and Social Security for the Women and Children of the *Adversely Affected Areas Due to Climate Change*;
- Construction of Embankment and Infrastructural Development of Polder No.5 to Tackle the Adverse Impact of Climate Change;
- Restoration of Forest and Conservation of Bio-diversity in the Wetland Area to Reduce the Adverse Impact of Climate Change;
- Coastal Afforestation to Combat the Adverse Impact of Climate Change.

Beside these, other activities are as follows;

- A multi-donor trust fund called ‘Bangladesh Climate Change Resilience Fund (BCCRF)’ has been established in 2011 in order to facilitate projects taken for adaptation. As of now, an amount of US\$ 190million has been deposited for this fund. Under the BCCRF, a project has been taken to establish Multipurpose Cyclone Shelter in the coastal area which is governed by the Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Co-operatives;
- The government is considering to establish a separate Directorate for Climate Change;
- *Strengthening Institutional Capacity of Climate Change Unit* is one of the most notable projects operating under Climate Change Trust Fund.

Good Governance and Reform Related Activities of Department of Environment

From the issues of Cancun Conference, the followings are few important activities carried out by Department of Environment (DoE) in FY 2012-13 were as follows:

- Prepared budget under the medium-term budget framework;
- Carried out campaigns and inspections to control environmental pollution all over the country by the Enforcement and Monitoring Unit of Head Office;
- Provided greater autonomy to Division/district level offices and updated Environment Conservation Act to respond to the changing circumstances;
- Taken steps to digitalize the activities of DoE.

River Water Pollution Control

Rivers help maintain ecological balance and add to the natural beauty. They also generate and keep afloat someeconomic activities. The water quality of the main rivers in Bangladesh such as the *Padma*, *Meghna*, *Jamuna*, *Korotoa*, *Dhaleshwari*, *Surma*, *Kushiara*are within the acceptable limit all the year round. But the water

quality of the rivers flowing around the Dhaka City namely *Buriganga, Balu, Shitalakhya* and *Turag* deteriorates drastically during the dry season when the water flow is very low. At these times Dissolved Oxygen (DO) of these rivers comes virtually to a naught for which phytoplankton and zooplankton cannot grow and live. The Government has, therefore, declared the rivers like *Buriganga, Shitalakshya, Turag, Balu* and their foreshores Ecologically Critical Area (ECA) to take necessary actions to improve the ecosystem of these rivers. After the Cancun Conference, it monitored water quality of 27 rivers at 88 points of the country in FY 2010-11. The parameters of water quality are: pH, Chloride, Turbidity, Total Dissolved Solid (TDS), Dissolved Oxygen (DO), Biochemical Oxygen Demand (BOD) and Chemical Oxygen Demand (COD).

Air Pollution Control

The DoE monitors air pollution and takes necessary measures for its control on the basis of the findings. The directorate has established Continuous Air Monitoring Stations (CAMS) in *Dhaka, Chittagong, Khulna, and Rajshahi* and receives results of monitoring from those stations. Bangladesh Government is implementing various programs to control air pollution. To upgrade air quality, a project financed by World Bank titled *The Clean Air Sustainable Environment (CASE)* is being implemented by DoE which has two main components:

- Environment: Emissions from brick kilns are included in this component. DoE is implementing this component and
- Vehicles: vehicles management and technical aspects are included in this component.

Forest Department Activities

The Forest Department is making all out efforts to ensure conservation and sustainable management of forests. The total forestland of Bangladesh is 1.60 million hectares of which 1.40 million hectares are natural forest and the rest 0.20 million hectares are created artificially by the forest Department in the coastal region. During FY 2012-13, the department implemented 13 development projects (12 investment projects and 1technical assistance project) with an ADP allocation of Tk. 15,405.00 lakh. Out of this allocation, an amount of Tk. 11,988.82 lakh was spent, which was 77.82 percent of the allocation. Notable plantation activities for FY2012-13 are- long rotation plantation(570ha.), short rotation plantation(700ha.),Block/wood lot plantation (202 ha),strip plantation (701 km),bamboo plantation(900ha.), *murtia* plantation(100ha.), *Jhao* plantation (40 ha.), agro-forestry plantation (128 ha.), *Eroded and landside hilly area* plantation (30 ha), Enrichment plantation (325 ha),Affirmation habitat rehabilitation (350 ha),Assisted Natural Regeneration (290 ha),institutional plantation(4lakh),sale and distribution of seedlings(7.55 lakh), rare species in eco-park and fruit trees plantation as animal feed for wildlife(1.91 lakh), mangrove plantation(3,500ha), *goalpata* plantation(500 ha), medicinal plantation(40 ha) etc.

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